

## **JUDICIAL STAFF COUNSEL I, II, III**

### **DEFINITION**

The Judicial Staff Counsel series describes levels of positions involved in performing a variety of professional legal research activities on behalf of the court. Duties include performing general and specialized legal research and analysis, reviewing cases and making recommendations to the court, advising the court on complex matters of law, preparing drafts of legal opinions, documents, and pleadings; and performing related duties as required.

### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

The Judicial Staff Counsel series is characterized by the level of service and expertise incumbents can be expected to provide and the difficulty of assignments that they receive. Judicial Staff Counsel I may be promoted to the Judicial Staff Counsel II upon receipt of a satisfactory work performance evaluation and must be promoted within 24 months or be terminated.

**Judicial Staff Counsel I:** This is the entry level of the series and performs legal research activities under closer supervision. Incumbents are given more responsible activities with less supervision as experience is gained.

**Judicial Staff Counsel II:** This is the second level of the series. Incumbents work under direction performing more difficult and complex legal research activities with less supervision and review and exercise a higher degree of independent judgment than Judicial Staff Counsel I.

**Judicial Staff Counsel III:** This is the fully qualified working level of the series. Incumbents perform difficult and complex legal research activities and must exercise a high degree of independent judgment.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

1. Researches difficult legal questions and prepares memoranda, documents and pleadings.
2. Reviews case files, researches legal issues and makes recommendations to the court or department.

3. Advises the court on difficult legal questions regarding specialized areas of law.
4. Confers with Judges, attorneys and any relevant sources with respect to procedural and substantive legal issues and requirements of individual cases in a timely manner.
5. Reviews cases on appeal, researches pertinent issues and law and prepares preliminary opinions for the court.
6. Proposes and prepares amendments to Judicial Council rules and procedures, court forms and other local legal processes.
7. Assists with the drafting of legislative measures.
8. Represents the court on procedural and substantive legal questions regarding individual cases in specialized areas of law.
9. Performs related duties as assigned.

### ***MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS***

*All Levels* - Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree. Special Requirement: Current active membership in the State Bar of California including maintaining compliance with mandatory continuing legal education (MCLE) requirements.

*Judicial Staff Counsel I* - One year of experience in civil legal practice including performing legal research and drafting legal opinions and/or briefs or any combination of training and experience that could provide the desired knowledge and abilities.

*Judicial Staff Counsel II* - Three years of experience in civil or criminal legal practice including performing legal research and drafting legal opinions and/or briefs and one year experience in litigation or any combination of training and experience that could provide the desired knowledge and abilities.

*Judicial Staff Counsel III* - Five years experience in civil or criminal legal practice including performing legal research and drafting legal opinions and/or briefs including three years experience in litigation or any combination of training and experience that could provide the desired knowledge and abilities.

### Knowledge of

Legal research methods, practices and techniques; law and legal principles, practices and procedures as applied to area(s) of assignment specialty; legal research methods and techniques; rules of evidence; scope and role of local court rules and procedures; conduct of proceedings in state and federal courts at trial and appellate levels; judicial ethics; case management, processing and calendaring practices within the local judicial system.

### Ability to

Independently identify and analyze legal issues; distinguish significant legal issues, facts and their effect; research statutes and case law; apply legal principles to case facts and make decisions; prepare and present legal analyses and recommendations for judicial action, orally and in writing; confer with and advise judicial officers, attorneys, court support staff and the public on procedural and substantive legal issues; handle sensitive matters with finesse and discretion; coordinate work with others; listen to argument/discussion and understand underlying problem/question; recognize and respect limit of authority and responsibility; uphold judicial ethics; work in an environment with conflicting priorities; conduct computer assisted legal research; use computer for legal research, word processing and communication.

### Special Requirements

A California driver's license requirement will be reviewed on a position basis in accordance with ADA regulations.

### **PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Strength, dexterity, coordination and vision to use a keyboard and video display terminal on a daily basis. Hearing to communicate with the public and court staff. Dexterity and coordination to handle files and single pieces of paper; occasional lifting of objects weighing up to 25 lbs. such as files, stacks of papers, reference and other materials. Moving from place to place within an office; some reaching for items above and below desk level.

Date Est. 4/00

Revised 3/02